

A
SERMON

Preached at a Publick

ORDINATION

A T

St. Peter's Cornhill.

MARCH 15th. 168 $\frac{4}{5}$.

BY

EDW. STILLINGFLEET, D.D.

DEAN of St. Paul's, and Chaplain in
Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *M. Fleſher*, for *Henry Mortlock*, at the
Phoenix in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1685.

II

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SERMON

Preached at a Publick

ORDINATION

A T

Walter's Council.

MARCH 15th 1683

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Dean of St. Paul's and Chaplain in
Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

L O N D O N

Printed by M. Mifflin, for Henry Mearns, at the
Pillar in St. Paul's Church-yard. 1683.

TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND
FATHER ⁱⁿ GOD,
HENRY,
LORD BISHOP of LONDON,
One of the LORDS of His MAJESTIES
PRIVY COUNCIL, &c.

My LORD,

W*hen I lately received Your Lordships Command for Printing the Sermon I Preached at Your last Solemn Ordination, I thought Your Lordships Authority and Judgment ought to Over-rule my own Inclinations; although the Experience of a former Storm, on a like Occasion, might justly make me unwilling to*

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venture abroad again, unless there were some Hopes of a Calmer Season. But whatever the Issue be, I have the Satisfaction of doing my Duty; and I hope others will have so much, at least in Reading it, as to be convinced, how unjustly I have been, not long since, represented to the World, as an Enemy to the very Being of Churches in general, and to the Constitution of this Church in particular.

A Calumny so groundless and ridiculous, that the Authour of it doth not produce one considerable Argument (for I envy him not the rare Embellishments of his Style) to prove the Church a distinct Society; which I had not made use of to that Purpose in a Discourse published above Twenty years since.

But this must never be taken notice of, nor any of those passages in my later Writings; wherein I had fully asserted and vindicated the Churches Power in general, and the particular Constitution of this Church, lest the World should laugh at the Folly and Malice of such an unskilfull Maker of Controversies, who follows the Schoolmen onely in two things, viz. a Barbarous Style, and a Rude Way of Disputing with his Brethren.

But

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But that is a small thing with him, who in one single Page of his Book, charges no less than two of our Renowned Archbishops, Whitgift and Bancroft, and the Learned Bishop of Winchester, Bilson, with Writing Inconsiderately; and that for a new sort of Henrician Herefie, viz. deriving the Magistrates Power from Christ.

Of the subject
of Church
Power, p.
314.

If this Person had not with great humility written himself the Vicar of Cosmus Blene, one might have thought, by these passages, he had fancied himself another kind of Vicar; especially, when he proceeds so like a Judge of Controversies, and after an imperious manner, summons me, by a kind of Citation, to answer to such Questions as he should demand of me; but out of Respect to Your Lordships Authority, and Jurisdiction over me, I declined giving any Answer to him. And he hath since Printed his Monitory Letter in the Preface to his Book. Therefore lest my silence on this Occasion, should make others think, there were some ground for such a Publick Accusation of me; I shall, in few words, lay open before Your Lordship, (to whom I owe an Account of my Actions) the Nature and Merits of this Cause, and the onely Foundation of all this Noise and Clamour, that Your Lordship may

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may Judge, how well I am treated by this Accuser of his Brethren.

It happen'd, my Lord, that in my younger days (about Twenty five years since) I thought it necessary to inform my self, as well as I could; in the state of the Controversie about Church Government, which had been managed with so much Heat among us, and was then like to be revived. And to that end I applied my self to the Reading and Considering the Authours of greatest esteem on both sides; and by diligent perusing of them, I thought them more happy, in overthrowing each others Hypothesis, than in setting up their own. And supposing no better Reasons could be produced than I found in them, I from thence concluded, that the Form of Church Government was left at Liberty by any Law of Christ, and was therefore to be determined, as served best to the great Ends of Peace and Order; which were the plain and standing Laws of the Christian Church.

To make this more clear, I considered the Nature and Force of Laws; what there was in the Christian Society, which was taken from the Law of Nature, what from Divine Positive Laws; whether the Places of Scripture, or Testimony of Antiquity, or Reformed Churches, did determine this Matter. All which being put together,

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together, I did adventure to publish at that time, hoping by that means to bring over those to a Compliance with the Church of England (then like to be Re-established) who stood off upon the Supposition, that Christ had appointed a Presbyterian Government to be always continued in his Church; and therefore they thought Prelacy was to be detested, as an unlawful Usurpation. In the very first Chapter of the Book I set my self to Answer the Presbyterian Arguments, without mentioning their Books, in which they may be still seen, and so quite through I omitted nothing that was pleaded by them against Submission to Episcopal Government. And I dare challenge any Man to produce one Passage in the whole Book that tended to incourage Faction or Schism, or Opposition to the Church of England; but on the contrary, I endeavour'd to recommend the Episcopal Government, as having the Advantage of all others, and coming nearest to Apostolical Practice; and I concluded all with the Proposal of King Charles I. at the end of his second Paper at the Isle of Wight, as most highly just and reasonable, viz. The reducing Episcopacy and Presbytery to such a well-proportion'd Form of Superiority and Subordination, as may best resemble the Apostolical

Ius Divinum
Regiminis
Ecclesiastici,
&c.

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lical and Primitive times, so far forth as the different condition of the times, and the exigences of all considerable circumstances will admit.

And now, my Lord, You see my Crime ; and if in this last I erred, it was with a most Excellent Prince, and a True Friend to the Church of England, whose Sufferings could never make him warp from what his Conscience and Judgment directed.

I do not deny, my Lord, that I do now think much more is to be said for the Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy, than I at that time apprehended (as will fully appear in the following Sermon:) But I confess, I yet see no Cause for such Clamours against this Book, as though nothing could satisfie but a Recantation of it, as Publick as the Errour, Scandal and Offence given by it. These are the Terms prescribed me by the Lofty Superintendent of Cosmus Blene ; but they are, in Truth, a Reflexion on all my Superiours in the Church, who, for so long a time, have been pleased to treat me with more Kindness, than so much as to mention any such thing to me, with respect to that unlucky Book, as my Accuser calls it. For they were so wise, to consider the Time when
it

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it was Written, viz. before the Church was Re-
establisht; And with what Design it was Writ-
ten, viz. to gain upon the Dissenters from our
Church. And it did not want Success, that
way, both here, and in a Neighbour King-
dom. But suppose there were Errours and
Mistakes in it (as no doubt there were) they
were so wise to make Allowances for the Scep-
ticalness and Injudiciousness of Youth, and for
the Prejudices of Education. All Men are not
so happy to be born or bred in settled times,
when they have had no Temptation to think
otherwise than they doe: but suppose a Man
brought up when all things are in Confusion,
and every one at liberty to chuse his own Way;
Was it not a fair step towards the Church of
England, even then to receive Episcopal Or-
ders, and to follow the Directions of an Ex-
cellent Bishop of this Church? Which things I
can truly affirm of my self at that time. And for
many years since it is well known, that besides the
constant Duties of my Place (in which I have
always opposed Faction and Schism) I have
made it my Business to defend the Church of
England, against its Enemies on both sides.

But it seems nothing can Atone for such an
Errour with these Implacable Men, but a Pub-
lick Recantation. And are we sure that will
doe

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doe it? It seems to me to be a Commendable Piece of Ingenuity in any Person, to Retract a former Opinion upon full Conviction, when it proceeds from Judgment and Choice; (for otherwise a Man is but like a Speaking-Trumpet, uttering the Words which others put into him:) but yet some Men love to be still rubbing upon the old sore, and upbraiding such a Man with what he hath Publickly Disowned, and with his very disowning of it: Which looks, as if they were glad he had been in the Wrong, and were unwilling he should be otherwise. So that, when Men are resolved to find Fault with others, no Recantation can doe them good; but it is very hard for us now to be under such a rigorous Dispensation, which makes every slip unpardonable. Especially, when it is set up by those, who have been such Offenders themselves. For some of these are most apt to be severe towards others; as if it were some Atonement for their own Mis-carriages, to be always finding fault with their Brethren. And I heartily wish, my Enemies have none greater to answer for, than such as arise from too great a Zeal for Peace and Unity among our selves. Yet if even therein I have gone beyond my bounds, I beg pardon of my Superiours; Since it is too evident, that an untractable Spirit on one side, as well as a pretence

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pretence to an Infallible Spirit on the other, render all Projects of Accommodation useless.

This I mention, my Lord, because I hear some Proposals of mine, when I was Writing against the Dissenters, have given offence to some, and have been made use of to ill purposes by others. But those who consider the Design and Tendency of them, and the Circumstances of that Time when they were made, will see no Cause to pass any severe Censure upon one, who Designed to serve the Church of England by them; as the Dissenters themselves confessed, and thought they would end in the Ruin of the Separation; and therefore never thanked me for them.

And now I hope Your Lordships Goodness (of which I have had so large Experience) will excuse all this Unpleasant Discourse (as usually Apologies are) but since my Accuser thinks Posterity will be concerned in his Writings in this Cause (I dare say not to make a Pattern for Style but of them) I was willing to take this opportunity to clear my self for once, to Your Lordship and the World.

As to his Accusation about Archbishop Crammer's MSS. I think he hath heard enough of that already: and he owes me a Publick Recantation upon his own Terms, for charging me
with

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*with Unfaithfulness therein, for the Scandal
and Offence hath been very Publick,*

*I am afraid I have exercised Your Lordships
Patience too long, and therefore humbly beg your
Lordships Blessing upon,*

My Lord,

*Your Lordships most Faithfull and
Obedient Servant.*

London, June 1st.

1685.

Edw. Stillingfleet.

[4]
1 TIM. 5. 22.

Lay bands suddenly on no man.

THESSE words, are Part of the Charge given by St. Paul to Timothy, whom he had intrusted with the Care of the Churches of the Proconsular Asia, when he departed from thence into Macedonia. For, although St. Paul saith, *be besought Timothy to abide still at Ephesus*; yet we are not to suppose, that his Care extended no farther, than to the Church in that City; seeing, by means of St. Paul's Preaching there, St. Luke affirms, *That all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks*. Which can neither be understood of the greater, or lesser Asia; but of that Asia, which lay about Ephesus, and whereof it was the (a) chief Metropolitan City, the

(a) Εἰς τὴν αὐτὴν τὴν Ἀσίαν Μετρώπολιν. Chrysost. in Ep. ad Ephes.

Certum est celeberrimam illam civitatem primam semper tenuisse inter omnes hujus Diocesis Metropoles. Euseb. Diatrib. 1. c. 2.

ΕΦΕΣΤΙΝ ΠΡΩΤΗΝ ΑΓΙΑΣ, in Numinis Galien's, Saloninae, Gordiani apud Holsen. not. in Steph. Byzant. p. 123.

Ἡ πρώτη, seu Prima vulgo Græcis διδία qua Romanis Metropoles, seu Gentis Capita. Ezek. Spanhem. de Numinis. dissert. p. p. 885.

(b) Roman

B

(b) *Prima Civitas sed que Proconsulu.*
Hollsten.

Ephesum veri, alterum lumen Afiz remotio-
res conveniunt. Plin. Nat. Hist. l. 9. c. 29.

(b) Roman Proconsul
keeping his ordinary
Residence there, and
holding those Solemn

Courts, to which the Inhabitants of
that Province were obliged to resort. But
withall, this was the (c) Principal City in the
Common Assembly of Asia, (d) a Place of great
Trading, the Seat of the most Magnificent
Temple of Diana, (e) where the Citizens of
Asia met to Worship; on all which Ac-
counts, there was a great Concourse of Peo-
ple thither from the parts thereabouts. It is
no wonder therefore St. Paul should fix his
abode so long in this City (f) for about the

(c) Euseb.
Hist. Eccles.

l. 4. c. 13.

(d) Strab.

l. 14. Aristid.

Orat. de Con-

cordia Civit.

Asia.

(e) H. Va-

lef. not. in Eu-

seb. l. 4. c. 13.

(f) Act. 20.
31.

(g) Bar. An.

Dom. 46. n.

12.

(h) Usser.

Annal. A. D.

45. 46.

Jac. Cappell.

Centur. prima

Eccles. Chris-

tian. A. D.

43. 45.

(i) Act. ch.

13 & 14.

(k) Act. 14.

23.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

ACTA 14.

space of three years in all. And yet a long time
for him, considering the quickness of his Pro-
gress in other places, (g) some allowing no
longer time to his first Peregrination, (h) o-
thers not so much) wherein he and Barnabas
planted Churches in (i) Seleucia, Cyprus, Pi-
sidia, Pamphylia and Lycaonia, (k) and ordai-
ned Elders in every Church with Fasting and
Prayer: from whence it is very reasonable to
infer,

(1.) That this Church at Ephesus was cer-
tainly beyond the compass of a particular
Congregation; or else St. Paul had very little
success in all the Pains he took there; which

he

he so (l) particularly mentions in the solemn leave he took of the *Elders of the Church* (1) *Act. 20.* whom he sent for to *Miletus*. And St. Luke speaking of the *Jews and Greeks dwelling in Ephesus*, saith, (m) *That fear fell on them all, and the Name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.* (m) *Act. 19.* So mightily grew the Word of God, and prevailed. And St. Paul himself takes notice, (n) that at *Ephesus* a great and effectual Door (n) *1 Cor. 16. 9.* was open'd unto him. What, for one single *Congregational Church* to be formed, in so great a City, with all the success St. Paul had in his Preaching there; when, in far less time, he planted so many Churches in other Places!

(2.) That the Extent of St. Paul's Care did reach beyond the Bounds of the City: it being very improbable, that those of *Asia* should so long hear St. Paul Preach at *Ephesus*, and yet no Churches be founded, by his means, in any of the neighbour Cities.

But withall, it seems probable to me, that the *Elders of those Churches* were not as yet removed from *Ephesus*, where St. Paul ordained them, with a design to fix them in their several Stations; For it is observable, that (o) St. Paul sent to *Ephesus* for the *Elders of the Church* to come to *Miletus*; whereas, if they (o) *Act. 19.* had been dispersed, he would have sent to

their several Places of abode; and yet when they came to *Miletus* from *Ephesus* (which

were not far distant, (p) he discourses to them of his Affairs from the time of his coming unto *Asia*; after what manner he had been with them at all Seasons, and had kept back nothing profitable for them; but had shewed them, and taught them publickly, and from house to house.

Which being spoken to the Elders of the Church, do imply a particular care he had there of fitting Persons for the Pastoral Charge, besides, his Testifying both to the Jews and to the Greeks Repentance towards God, and Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And, to these Elders, he not only commits the Church of *Ephesus*, but all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers, i. e. all that had been converted in *Asia*, through his means, during

(p) If by *Miletus* that Place be meant, which is now called *Figena*, or *Scala Nova*, as some imagine, that lies but 10 Miles from *Ephesus* to the South west; but that rather seems to be the *Phygela* of the Ancients. The Modern Geographers, who make it to be *Melisso*, are certainly mistaken, not only because of the too great distance from *Ephesus*, but because its Situation doth not agree with that of *Miletus*; for it appears by *Livy* and *Solinus*, that the *Meander* ran into the Sea, between *Miletus* and *Priene*; and but 10 *Stadia* from *Miletus*. *Scrib. Pliny*; but *Melisso* is a great distance from it. Our latest Travellers think it *Palatna*; but *Dr. Spon* confesses that to be some Miles from the Sea; and therefore it seems yet to lie undiscovered in its Ruins, as is well observed by *Sir G. Wheeler*. *Ferrarius* placeth *Ephesus* at 30 Miles distance, between *Smyrna* and *Miletus*. *Spon* saith, It is a day and a halfs journey from *Ephesus* to *Palatichla*. *Arrian* describes *Miletus* as not far from *Ephesus*, and very near the Sea.

Solin. c. 40.

Plin. l. 5 c. 29.

Voyage du Levant. To. 1. p. 359.

Wheeler's Voyage into the Lesser Asia. p. 272.

Arr. de Expedition. Alex. l. 1.

v. 21.

v. 28.

ring his abode there. (q) *Irenæus* understands ^{(q) Iren. l. 3. c. 14.} *St. Paul*, as though he *summon'd them from the Neighbour Cities; as well as Ephesus;* but *St. Paul* was in so great haste, that he would not so much as go to *Ephesus*, nor send any whither but to that City; and yet those to whom he committed the whole Flock then in *Asia*, came from *Ephesus* to *Miletus*; which makes it probable, that there *St. Paul* had raised a Nursery for the Churches thereabout; as (r) ^{(r) Clem. Epist. p. 54.} *Clemens* observes the Apostles were wont to doe in Fruitfull Soils; with a prospect of such Churches as were to be formed. *Τὰν μαθητῶν ἤδη τῶν.* Now where these were not yet settled, such Persons remained under the Apostles immediate Care and Instruction, who by their Doctrine and Example, were still preparing them for so great a Work. And *Clemens* takes notice that the Apostles were wont to pitch upon their First-Fruits, or most early Converts; and of these at *Ephesus* we meet with Twelve Persons, upon whom Saint *Paul*, at his first coming, laid his hands, and ^{Act. 19. 6. 7.} the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with Tongues, and Prophefied. And so were qualified, in an extraordinary manner, to be Teachers of others; and might be in the number of these Elders, whom *St. Paul* charges to take heed to themselves, and to all the

the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers.

When St. Paul sent for these Elders to Miletus, Timothy was with him: For, we find him amongst those who waited for his return at (f.) Troas, upon his coming back from Macedonia through Greece; and therefore his leaving Timothy at Ephesus, was, when he first went into Macedonia, being forced away by the Uproar that was raised against him there. And in his return through Greece, where he abode three Months, he sends this Epistle to Timothy, then at Ephesus, and taking Care of the Churches thereabout: As he afterwards left Titus in Crete, to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain Elders in every City, as he had appointed him. To this purpose he directs this Canonical Epistle to Timothy; wherein he gives him very particular Directions about the due Exercise of that Apostolical Office, which he was entrusted with the management of; And especially about these things,

(1) The great regard he ought to have to the Doctrine that was taught by those, who were to instruct others; that thou mightest charge some, that they teach no other Doctrine.

(2.) The

(2.) The due Performance of the *Publick Offices of Divine Worship*; that *Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions and giving of thanks* 1 Tim. 2. 1. be made for all Men; for Kings and for all that are³ in Authority, &c. And this order Timothy was to see observed in the Churches under his Care.

(3.) The proper Qualifications of the *Bishops and Deacons of the Church*, as the proper Officers of it under Timothy; who was to take care of fit Men, to succeed those who were then in being, or to provide more. Ch. 3.

(4.) The manner of proceeding in *Church Censures* against *Elders and Widows*, and open Offenders: *Against an Elder receive not an Accusation, but before two or three Witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.* Ch. 5. 1. to the 24th. Which plainly shews, that there was a Right of Judging and Censuring Offenders in Timothy, by virtue of his Office.

(5.) The Caution to be used, in admitting Persons to these holy Functions, the Qualifications whereof he had laid down before: And for this he gives a general charge, to doe nothing in these matters by *Partiality*; and then mentions the Consideration and Circumspection necessary in the *laying on of Hands*; *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* v. 21.

Some:

Some have thought these words relate to the *Reconciliation of Penitents*, and not to the *Ordination of the Bishops and Deacons* before mentioned; because it immediately follows, *neither be partaker of other mens sins*; but I see no Cause to recede from the Sense generally received, for these Reasons,

(1.) Because *St. Paul* had not mentioned *laying on of hands* in relation to *Penitents*; but he had done it in this *Epistle*, with respect to *Ordination*; and that in *Timothy's* own Case; wherein *St. Paul* as the principal Person did in an Authoritative manner, *lay on his hands*, as himself expresses it, in the second *Epistle*; and the *Presbyters* assisted in *laying on their hands*, to manifest their concurrence and Approbation: but the *laying on of hands* is no where in these *Epistles*, applied to the other Sense; nor in any other place of Scripture.

(2.) If these words do not relate to *Ordination*, *St. Paul* would have given *Timothy* no particular direction, about that which was one main part of his Office. As it is expressed concerning *Titus*, *That he was appointed to ordain Elders in every City*: And no doubt *Timothy* had the same Commission, which is no where intimated but in these words

(3.) Sup-

(3.) Supposing, *laying on of hands* then equally used in both Cases, yet the Apostle gives no Rules concerning the *Qualifications* of *Penitents*, as he doth concerning *Bishops* and *Deacons*; and therefore we have more cause to apply it according to the chief intention and design of this Epistle; but he saith nothing before, what *Penitents* were to be reconciled; and after what time, and under what Conditions they were to have *hands laid on them* in token of Reconciliation. And there is no concurrent *Evidence* of such a Practice, so early in the Christian Church.

(4.) The following words are capable of a very good meaning, according to this Sense. For then *being partaker of other mens Sins*, doth imply, that as it is a Fault in those who rudely, and inconsiderately, without due preparation of Mind, do rush upon so Sacred an Office; so those cannot acquit themselves of a great share in their Guilt, who do not use their best endeavours, by due *Examination* and *Trial* of the Persons, to keep them from entring upon it, till they are prepared and qualified for it.

(5.) The great use of the *laying on of hands* in the *New Testament*, is for the setting Persons apart for the discharge of a Sacred Office. So, when the Office of *Deacons* was

Act. 6. 6.

first instituted, it is said, *They were set before the Apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.* And which is more considerable; when Barnabas and Paul, by the particular appointment of the Holy Ghost,

Act. 13. 2, 3. *were to be separated unto the Work whereto God had called them; it is said, And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.* Here it was not for mi-

Mark 16.

18.

Act. 28. 8.

Act. 8. 15.

15. 19. 6.

raculous Cures, as the Apostles sometimes used it to Sick Persons; nor for conferring miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, as at other times they used it; (and probably this was the Gift

2 Tim. 1. 6. *of God which Timothy had, by laying on of the Apostles hands;)* neither was it a mere Rite of Benediction, as Jacob laid his hands on the

Gen. 48. 14. *sons of Joseph; and our Saviour on the Chil-*

Mark 10. 26. *dren when he blessed them; but it was a solemn*

Rite of Dedication of particular Persons to God, when they are set apart for the Exercise of a Function which immediately related to his Service. I confess, that among the

Exod. 29. 9, *Jews, it was not used in the Consecration of*

10. 15. 19. *Priests; For, Aaron and his sons were to lay*

their hands on the Sacrifices that were offered on that occasion, and particularly on the

Ram of Consecration; but the Ceremony was

Lev. 8. 14. *performed by putting some part of the Ram,*

18. 22. *and the Cakes, and the Wafer upon Aaron's*

hands

hands, and his sons hands. For the Priesthood of the Law being a *Work of the hands*, the Ceremony was very fitly applied to them; but that of the Gospel being more intellectual and spiritual, the *laying on of hands on the Heads* of the Persons devoted thereto, was more agreeable to the design of it. And this was an ancient Custome among the Jews in employments of the highest nature. So Moses laid his hands on Joshua; and then it is said, *that he was full of the Spirit of Wisdom* for Moses had laid his hands on him: and from hence it came to be an usual Ceremony among the Jews, in the Solemn Designation of Persons for Sacred Employments, either to be *Rulers or Teachers* in their Synagogues. And from thence it was not onely brought into the *Christian Church*, but made use of to express that *Right and Authority* which Persons do receive together with it, for the *Exercise and Discharge* of their Ministerial Function.

26. 27. 28.

Numb. 27.

18. 23.

Deut. 34. 9.

So that from these Words, there are Three things considerable to be spoken to,

(I.) The *Nature* of the Office to which they are ordained, by *laying on of hands*.

(II.) The *Authority* here supposed in *Timothy*, to admit Persons to this Office, by *laying on of hands*.

(III.) The great *Care* and *Circumspection* necessary for the right performing it ; *Lay hands suddenly on no man*.

(I.) The *Nature* of the Office ; which may relate both to *Bishops* and *Deacons* before mention'd ; But the principal parts of that Office, which is here chiefly meant, are by *St. Paul* said to be these two ; *Ruling well*, and *Labouring in the Word and Doctrine*.

Hier. Com-
ment. in *Epist.*
ad *Tit.*

(1.) *Ruling well* ; Not, in opposition to *Timothy*, who was to *Rule them well* ; nor so as to imply, that the entire Power of Government was lodged in a College of *Presbyters* then, as *St. Jerome* imagins ; for what had *Timothy* then to doe in the governing them ? I cannot find any Argument of Force in the *New Testament*, to prove, that ever the *Christian Churches* were under the sole Government of *Presbyters*. For what *St. Jerome* alledgeth, doth by no means prove it : I grant he proves, That the Name of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were at that time common to the same Persons ; But what then ? Suppose the *Bishop* and
Elder

Elder here in *Timothy's* Epistle were the same: Doth this prove, that these Govern'd the Church without *Timothy*? The true Question is not, about the Sense of Words, but about the Authority of these *Bishops* or *Presbyters*, i. e. Whether the whole Care of their Churches were committed to them, without any Superior Jurisdiction? What if it be yielded to *St. Jerome*, That the *Bishops* and *Deacons* at *Philippi* were no other than the *Presbyters* and *Deacons*; as long as the Apostle, either in Person, or by some other appointed by himself, did rule over them? What, if the *Bishops* summon'd to *Miletus*, were no other than the *Pastours* and *Teachers*? Did not *St. Paul* himself, at that very time, call them together, and give a Charge and Direction to them, as one who had Authority over them? So that it doth no where appear, in Scripture, that the *Presbyters* were invested in the Supreme Power over the Church.

But yet they were not excluded from all kind of share in the Government, for then they could never be said to Rule well, who had nothing at all to doe in Government: And those who are under a Supreme may be called *Governours*, and are to be obey'd according to the Nature of their Authority; which doth relate to Men in another capacity, and for very

very different ends from what Civil Government doth.

Revel. 17. 14.
19. 16.

For the Church is a Society in its Nature, Design, Duties, Offices, Censures, really distinct from any mere Humane Institution. And no Christian, who believes that the Kingdom of the *Messias* was to be an external, visible Kingdom, can be of another Opinion. And although Christ be *the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, and therefore *as Kings* they are subject to him; yet that Authority which Christian Kings do exercise over their Subjects, doth not overthrow the Rules and Orders which himself hath establish'd in his Church. For no Power derived from him can void or destroy his own Laws and Institutions. Since then the Church doth subsist by virtue of Christ's own Appointment, and that Church is to have peculiar Officers to instruct and govern it, it must follow, that even in a *Christian Kingdom*, the Church is a Society distinct from the Common-wealth.

(2.) *Labouring in the Word and Doctrine.* Not to distinguish them from another sort of *Elders*, whom St. Paul never thought of: For he knew of none but such as were set apart by *laying on of hands*, and therefore dedicated to the Work of the Ministry; and

if

if *St. Paul's Bishop* and *Elder* were the same, they must have the same *qualifications*; and one of the chief of them is, *that he be apt to teach*; so that they may as well plead for a *Lay Bishop*, as for a *Lay Elder*; or else the *Elder* must be *one apt to teach*, if the same with the *Bishop*. 1 Tim. 3. 2.

But some may say, "There was then indeed great need of *labouring in the Word and Doctrine*, when the Christian Doctrine was not well known, or understood in the World; But what necessity is there of it now, when all People own the Profession of Christianity among us? And this continual Preaching doth but fill the People's heads with too much Knowledge, and makes them more opinionative, and less capable of being governed."

To which I Answer,

If Christ appointed Preachers only for the Conversion of Infidels, this Argument would have great force: But the Apostle tells us, That Christ hath appointed in his Church, not only *Apostles and Evangelists*, but *Pastors and Teachers*; for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the Body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect Man, Ephes. 4. 11, 12.

Man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Therefore as long as the Church is in its imperfect State, as long as it may want Unity or Knowledge, or Improvement, this Office of Teachers is to continue. And those Elders will still deserve double honour, who do not perfunctorily and rarely discharge this Duty, but who do labour in the Word and Doctrine.

There are indeed many sorts of Preaching, which the Church stands in no need of, because they tend so little to Edification: Such are all fine Harangues in the Pulpit, *i.e.* Words well put together without suitable Matter; All dry, flat, insipid Discourses, about things of no great consequence to Mens Salvation; All affectations of Jingling Sentences, Farfetched Allusions, Elaborate Trifles; All impertinent Disputes about needless, vain, intricate Controversies; All Enthusiastick unintelligible Talk, which tends to confound Mens Notions of Religion, and to evaporate the true Spirit of it into Fancies and Eastern Modes of speaking: Lastly, All Corrupt and Seditious Doctrine, which Poisons the Minds of People, with dangerous Errours, or Factious Principles.

But

But setting all these aside, there remains a Grave, Serious, Pious, Affectionate, Convincing way of Preaching; which is profitable, in its degree, for the same ends for which the holy Scripture is usefull, viz. for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in ^{2 Tim. 3. 16.} Righteousness, i. e. for the best purposes in the World. And can any think such a Work to be now unnecessary, as long as Men have Consciences to be awaken'd, Errours to be confuted, Vices to be reform'd, and stand so much in need of good direction in the way to Heaven?

Can we be employ'd about a better or more usefull Work than this? While the Souls of those under our Care, are in such perpetual danger, either of being overspread with Errours, or overcome with Temptations, or overset with Difficulties, or overwhelmed with Fears? When should the Pilots shew their Skill and Courage, and Diligence, but when the Sea is rough, and the Weather Tempestuous, and Banks of Sand appear of one side, and Rocks on the other, and so many Wrecks before them; and the common Mariners are bold and unskilfull, unable to govern, and impatient of being govern'd? Is it time then to say, There is no need of Pilots now, but they may lie in their

Cabins and sleep, for the Ship will steer it self well enough, and the Mariners cannot fail of their Duty, as long as the Coasts are known, and the Rocks have been discover'd to them?

It is very true, that the way to Heaven is not now hard to find; but it is no easie matter to bring Men to look in earnest after it, or to keep them in it. And here lies the main of our Work of Preaching; We are not to teach Men new Doctrines, but to Clear, Defend, and Apply the old, to the Consciences of Men. It is very easie to shoot over the Peoples heads, and to spend an hour to little or no purpose; but it requires all our skill to Preach plainly without flatness; and to set the Matters of Religion in the best light, and to recommend them to the Minds of People, with the greatest force of Persuasion. It is no hard matter to trifle away the time, but it is not so to speak Suitably, Warmly and Effectually to the Hearts of our Hearers; to make them find the same effect of our Preaching, which the two Disciples did, when Christ unknown was discoursing with them; *When they said to one another, Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?* That is then the best way of Preaching

Luk. 24. 31.

Preaching, which hath Light and Heat together; which clears the Scriptures to the Peoples Capacities, and warms their Affections to Spiritual things. And it is hardly possible to mistake, as to the best Method of Preaching, if Men do but judge aright concerning the End and Design of it. For there must be Strength and Clearness to convince; and a close Application to Mens Consciences, to Excite and Persuade them to the Practice of those things which Men can hardly be ignorant of, and yet are very backward to doe. And therefore this must be the chief Work and Business of our Preaching.

Which none ought to undervalue or be ashamed of, who do in earnest believe God and another World; none ought to neglect, whose peculiar Office and Dignity it is to take Care of Mens Souls; and none will be careless in it, who have a regard to their own or others Souls. *For in doing this,* 1 Tim. 4. 16. *saith St. Paul to Timothy, speaking of his diligence in his Function, Thou shalt both save thy self and them that hear thee;* as though a Man's own Salvation, and that of his Hearers, went together. That is indeed the most desirable thing in the World to be the Instruments of carrying Souls to Heaven; *for they* Dan. 12. 3. *who convert many to righteousness, shall shine as*

Ila. 49. 4.

the stars for ever and ever : but yet, the most carefull Endeavours do not always meet with Success ; and even our Blessed Saviour's Preaching , *who spake as never man spake*, was ineffectual to many ; (What then may we expect !) But this is our Duty, and the most likely way of doing good to Souls, as appears by our Saviour's own Practice ; and if we do not meet with success to our desires , let us not give over doing our Duty ; and say , *We have labour'd in vain, and spent our strength for nought and in vain ; for surely our judgment is with the Lord, and our Work with our God, as the Prophet speaks ; and if we fail of a Recompence in this World, we shall not in another.*

II. And so I come from the *Nature* of the Office, to the *Authority* of *Conferring* it ; these words implying it to belong to *Timothy*, as being spoken particularly to him, *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* For although he often speaks of the *Bishops* and *Elders* before ; yet he gives no charge about *Ordination*, but onely to *Timothy*.

“ True, *some say*, in this particular Case ;
 “ but this was by virtue of an *Extraordinary*
 “ *Commission* given to him, as an *Evangelist*
 “ by *St. Paul* : But what is this to the stand-
 “ ing

"ing Rule and Practice of the Church in
 "succeeding Ages? which is not to be go-
 "vern'd by such *Precedents*, unless the Suc-
 "cession in the same Office be made appear
 "in the following Bishops of the several
 "Churches.

To make this Matter as clear as I can
 I shall recommend these things to
 consideration.

(I. *Consid.*) That from hence appears evi-
 dently, That the *Apostolical Power* of *Governing*
Churches, and *Ordaining Elders* in them, was
 not limited to the Persons of the *Apostles*, but
 was capable of being communicated to o-
 thers whom the Apostle entrusted with it.
 And this is a very material Point, to Prove,
 that this Power was not so peculiar to the
Apostles, but it might be transmitted to o-
 thers, and therefore might be continued
 in the Church.

But the great Objection against *Timothy's*
 being a Pattern for *Episcopal Power*, is this;
 "That it appears by Scripture, he was sent up
 "and down to several Places, as *St. Paul*
 "thought fit. For he took him into his at-
 "tendance at (a) *Lystra*; from whence he (a) *Ac. 16.*
 "accompanied him through (b) *Phrygia, Ga-* (b) *Gal.*
 "latia,

- (c) 12. 44 *latia, Macedonia, (and (c) there from Philip-*
 17. 1. 10. *pi to Thessalonica and Berea.) And when he*
 (d) v. 15. 44 *went to Athens, he (d) sent for Timothy to*
 * *him, and sent him from thence back to*
 (e) 1 Thes. 11 *Thessalonica; and he returned from (e) Ma-*
 3. 1. 2. 44 *cedonia to him (f) at Corinth. From thence*
 (f) Act. 18. 44 *St. Paul went into (g) Syria, and so to (h) E-*
 (g) 5. 18. 44 *phesus; and there again he sent Timothy in-*
 (h) 19. 44 *to (i) Macedonia with Brastus; (k) whither St.*
 (i) Act. 19. 44 *Paul went afterwards himself. And upon*
 22. 44 *his return to Miletus, he speaks to the El-*
 (20. 1. 44 *ders, and not to Timothy, as their Bishop.*
 44 *From hence, they say, St. Paul took him*
 24. 44 *to Jerusalem, and so to Rome, as appears*
 26. 44 *by the Epistles Written from thence.*

From this Series of the Story they conclude *Timothy* to have been onely an *Evangelist*, and not a fixt *Bishop*.

To which I Answer; That the frequent removes of *Timothy*, before this *Epistle* to him at *Ephesus*, are not material to this purpose. But it is very material to consider, what Power of Government *St. Paul* then committed to him. Which is a certain Proof, that such a Power was not so peculiar to the *Apostles*, by vertue of their immediate Commission from *Christ*, but it might be

be delegated to others in their stead. Whether for a longer or shorter time, whether while the Apostles went up and down, or near their Decease, makes no difference, as to the Point of Delegation. And if it be granted, that such an Apostolical Power of Governing Churches might be committed to others, and was actually so by the *Apostles*; then there is no more to be done, but to enquire, whether upon their Remove, or Departure, they did entrust any Persons in such a manner, as it is certain from Scripture Saint *Paul* did *Timothy*, as to the Churches of *Asia*, when he went into *Macedonia*.

Some think, that St. *Paul's* leaving *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, was upon his return out of *Macedonia*, when he was going up to *Jerusalem*, knowing that they should see his face no more; and that while he staid for him at *Troas*, he sent this *Epistle* to him. But St. *Paul's* words are too plain to be avoided, that he left him at *Ephesus*, *Προσχωρῶν εἰς Μακεδονίαν*, which can never be interpreted returning from *Macedonia*. And there was as much need of one to look after the Churches of *Asia*, when St. *Paul* was then absent in *Macedonia*, as when he went to *Jerusalem*: and so (1) *Theodor.* understands it. But if *Timothy* were then with St. *Paul*, as appears by his being
at

(1) *Theodor.*
dor. *Præfat.*
in *Epist. Pau.*
li.

(m) Act. 20. at (m) *Troas*, when he went from thence to *Miletus*, that was sufficient Reason why he did not address himself to him, but to the *Elders which came from Ephesus*; whom he put in mind of their Duty by his *Speech*, as he had done *Timothy* by an *Epistle* not long before directed to him.

Whose Office was no more superseded by this Charge given to them; than a *Pro-consul* was by the *Senats Instructions* to his *Legats*, when himself was present.

If it were evidently proved, that *St. Paul* then carried away *Timothy* with him to *Jerusalem*, and so to *Rome*, there would be greater force in the Objection. But how doth that appear? Not from Scripture. For when *St. Paul* appeared at the Temple, the *Jews* laid hold on him, because they supposed

(n) Act. 21. (n) he had brought *Trophimus* the *Ephesian* with him into the Temple, whom they had seen so much with him in the City. How came *Timothy* not to be as much taken notice of, if he were there? For, he being discovered by the *Jews of Asia*, there was far greater Reason for them to have raised a Tumult about *Timothy*, than about *Trophimus*.

(o) Act. 24. After this, we find (o) *St. Paul* kept two years in Prison, and not a word of *Timothy*, whom

whom we may justly suppose exercising his Charge all that time at *Ephesus*. When Saint Paul was carried to *Rome*, we find not Timothy in his Company; no mention being made of him till he Wrote the *Epistles* to the (p) *Philippians* and (q) *Colossians*, and then (r) Phil. 1. Timothy was with him. For St Paul had sent (q) Coloss. 1. 1. for him from *Ephesus* in his Second (r) 2 Tim. 4. 9. *Epistle*; where, in all probability, he remained till that time. During his stay at *Rome* those *Epistles* were Written, as likewise that to *Philemon*, and to the *Hebrews*; in which it is said, (f) That he had been Imprison'd, and was then (f) Heb. 13. at Liberty; and intended shortly to return into the Eastern Parts. From henceforwards we read nothing of Timothy in Scripture. But (t) (t) Hier. in St. Jerome himself makes him Bishop of the *Ephesians*, and so doth (u) Eusebius; (x) Theodoret calls him, The Apostle of those in Asia; and St. (y) Chrysostome saith, The whole People of Asia were committed to his Charge, i. e. of this Proconsular Asia, which lay about *Ephesus*. (u) Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 4. (x) Theod. in 1 Tim. 3. 1. (y) Chrys. in 1 Tim. 5. 19. Hom. 15.

And now let any reasonable Man consider, whether there be not sufficient Proof, that the Apostolical Power of Governing Churches was communicated to others besides the Apostles themselves; and consequently there

might be a Succession in that Power, in as many as the Apostles thought fit.

(2) Walo.
Anag. c. 1.
p. 40. 50. 81.

It is confessed by some (2) That there were Secondary Apostles, such as besides Timothy and Titus, Linus, Clemens and Epaphroditus are said to have been; but these are called Itinerant Preachers, and not fixed Bishops. But the same Persons observe from (a) Theodoret, not only that these were called Bishops afterwards; but that the Reason why St. Paul Wrote Epistles to some, and not to others, was, because some he took with him, and others he entrusted with the Government of Churches. *Ἐκκλησιαστικὰ ἱστορικά*, which can hardly agree to Itinerant Preachers.

Walo, &c. p.
50.

But it is said, These Secondary Apostles were not sent by Christ, but by the Apostles. And what then? Would the Apostles betray their Trust, and commit part of that charge to others, which was entrusted only to themselves? But if this Office were by the Will of Christ appropriated to the Persons of the Apostles, they could not commit it to others without breach of Trust. And if it were not so, then this Power might be communicated to as many as the Apostles judged convenient; and so (as I said before) we have nothing farther to do, but to enquire, whether at their removal from particular Churches,

Churches, they did not put this Power into the Hands of others.

(II. *Confid.*) Whether the *Apostles*, upon their withdrawing, did pass this Power over to others, as St. *Paul* did plainly in the Case of *Timothy* and *Titus*, is a matter of Fact; and to be proved in such a manner as such a thing is capable of. We find plainly, the *Apostles* had this Power in themselves, and did convey it to some others; but whether *Universally*, and with a design to continue this Order, must be proved by the best means, we can doe a matter of Fact of so great Antiquity.

(III. *Confid.*) There can be no stronger Proof of such a matter of Fact, than the general sense of the *Christian Church* in the Ages next succeeding the *Apostles*.

Now, as to the finding out the general sense of the *Church*, as to this matter, I shall premise Three things.

(1.) It is not necessary to prove from *Scripture*, that the *Apostles* did observe the same method in all Churches; which we find, as to the Churches of *Ephesus* and *Crete*. For we have no such particular account, as to the other Churches; but we are certain

St. Paul would do no irregular thing, nor communicate an Office to others, which was to expire with themselves.

(2.) It is not at all necessary, to prove, that all the Bishops mention'd in Scripture had this Apostolical Power; for the contrary appears in the Bishops under Timothy and Titus: and therefore the Succession is not to be drawn from the Bishops mentioned in the Epistles to them, but from themselves; the want of considering this one Point, hath caused more perplexity in the Controversie about Episcopacy, than any one thing besides.

(3.) It is not necessary that the Succession in this Apostolical Power be made equally clear in all Churches; since the Records of the Church may be more doubtfull and defective in some Churches which are not in others. But yet there are these ways to make out the general Sense of the Christian Church, as to this point.

(1.) That the Evidence of the Succession is clear in the most conspicuous Churches, by undoubted Testimonies.

(2.) That those who seem'd most doubtfull about the first Succession, do yield the general

neral Consent of the Church in the Practice of it.

(1.) As to the undoubted Testimonies of this Succession in the most conspicuous Churches; I shall first appeal to *Irenæus* and *Tertullian*, as least liable to Exception. The former not onely mentions a Succession of Persons to the Apostles; but he saith,

(*) The Apostles committed the Care of the Churches to them; and left them to succeed in their

(*) Qui ab Apostolis ipsis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiis — quibus etiam ipsi Ecclesias committunt — quos & Successores relinquebant, suum ipsorum locum Magistrum tradentes. Iren. l. 3. c. 3.

Places: Which implies, that as the Apostles themselves had the Care of the Church, so they committed it to the Bishops, whom they chose to succeed them. *Tertullian* not onely mentions those in general who succeeded the Apostles, but particularly instanceth in *Polycarp*, placed by St. John at *Smyrna*; and *Clemens*, by St. Peter at *Rome*; and then adds, (†) That the other Churches had Bishops placed in them like to these.

(†) Prinde utique & ceteris exhibent quos ab Apostolis in Episcopatum constitutos Apostolici seminis traduces habeant. Tertull. de praescript. c. 32.

So that what Authority *Polycarp* had at *Smyrna*, or *Clemens* at *Rome*, that *Tertullian* affirms the Bishops had in other Churches. Now *Irenæus* saith, That *Clemens* had *Episcopatum*

ad-

Chryf. To. 5.
p. 499.

adminiftranda Ecclefia, i.e. the Epifcopal Power of governing the Church which the Apoftles delivered to them. And St. Chryfoftome faith of Ignatius, That he Received the Government of that Church from the Apoftles own hands. And the Commentatour on the Apocalypfe, under St. Ambrofe's Name, calls the Angels of the Seven Churches, The Governours of thofe Churches. From all which, we may juftly infer, That this Succeffion was not in mere Prefidency of Order, but that the Bifhops fucceeded the Apoftles in the Government over thofe Churches. But as Theodoret well obferves, The Name of Apoftles was not continued, out of Reverence to the Apoftles; but the Name of Bifhops was then appropriated to the Succeffors of the Apoftles. Which alteration of the Name, hath proved another great Occafion of the Confufion in this Controverfie. But that the

Theod. ad
1 Tim. c. 3.

(*) Cyprian. Epift. 3. 66. ed. Ox. Hier.
in Pfal. 44. ad Evagr. Ep. 85. ad Marcellam.
Aug. in Pfal. 44. Ambrofe in Eph. 4. 11. &
in 1 Cor. 12. 28.

Bifhops did fucceed the Apoftles, we have the general Consent of the Ancient (*) Fathers, who

were the moft competent Witneffes in this Cafe; which is an Argument, they believed the Apoftolical Power, with refpect to the Government of Churches, did not expire with the Apoftles, but was to continue, as long as Chrift had promifed to be with them, i. e.

Matt. 28. 20. To the end of the World.

(2.) That

(2.) That those who seem'd most doubtful about the *Original* of *Episcopacy*, doe yield the general consent of the Church in the Practice of it. Some few of the *Ancients* must be allowed to have had *singular Fancies and Opinions* of their own, about this Matter. And the not yielding this, hath been another great Advantage to the Enemies of *Episcopacy*.

But, as to those few among the Fathers, who have advanced singular Opinions about the *first Government of Churches*, I desire these things may be observed.

(1.) That it is no wonder there should be different Opinions about the Beginnings of things, which are generally very obscure; and therefore thinking Men are apt to frame different *Hypotheses* about them. As about the *Original* of Civil Government; some founding it in Dominion and Property; others on Consent of the People; others in a Natural Right of Sovereignty, which one preserves, and the rest part with; others in Primogeniture; and lastly, others most reasonably in Divine Providence and Institution. Whilst these things lie onely in *Speculation*, a difference of Opinions is hard to be prevented, and of no such ill consequence to the World: but if Men, from those *Speculations*,

culations, draw such Inferences as tend to disturb the Peace of the World, and to withdraw Men from Obedience to Government; then such Opinions are to be looked on as Dangerous and Seditious, and care must be taken to prevent their spreading. So here, about the Rise of *Episcopal Government*, if the Question were only a matter of Curiosity, *Whether the Apostles did first try the Experiment of Presbyters governing in common, and upon the inconveniencies of that Government set up Bishops, as St. Jerome seems to think; or, Whether there were at first a Succession in Course, as another of the Ancients imagin'd, till the inconveniencies of that made a Choice necessary*: If it went no farther than bare *Speculations*, though these Opinions may be both false, yet they are not dangerous: But when any from hence infer, the *Episcopal Government* to be an *Usurpation*, and that Men are bound to restore the Right of Presbyters in opposition to them, notwithstanding the Universal Consent of the Church; from the Apostles times; then such Opinions change their Nature, and become mischievous in their Consequences.

Sub Nomi-
ne Ambrosii
in c. 4. ad E-
pistol.

(2.) It is a great Argument against these singular Opinions, that they contradict each other; and therefore the General Sense of the Church

Church is to be prefer'd before them. For St. Jerome affirms, *That from St. Mark's time, in the Church of Alexandria, the Presbyters always chose one of their Body, whom they made their Bishop*: So that no such thing could ever be practised there, as a *Succession in Course*, which the other affirms. And as it is the great Advantage of Monarchy, that it had the General Consent of Mankind in the Eldest times; and that those who would set up Popular Government, differ so much in the First Principles and Fundamentals of it; So it is, as to the Government of the Church by Bishops, that even these who differ about the First Form, yet agree in the early Change, and the Universal Consent in it.

(3.) If St. Jerome be understood of the setting up Episcopacy in the *Apostolical Churches*, after the Apostles times, and a trial then made of Governing by Presbyters, he cannot be excused from contradicting himself as well as the rest of the Fathers. For what Experiment was there of that kind in the Church of Alexandria, if from St. Mark's time, the Presbyters set up one above themselves, as an Army making choice of a General; which are his own Expressions. Will any Man say, An Army is Governed by a Council of Inferiour Officers, when they have a General over

F

them,

Hieroni. ad
Gali. 2. & in
Script. Eccl.
clef.

In Catalog.

them, though of their own choosing? So in the Church of Jerusalem, he saith. St. James was the first Bishop; How was that Church then Governed by a College of Presbyters? At Ephesus, he confesses Timothy was Bishop there; and Titus in Crete. At Rome he makes Linus and Clemens to succeed in the Bishoprick there. At Antioch, he saith, Ignatius was Bishop, and he owns his Epistles, and surely there is nothing like the sole Government by Presbyters in them. At Smyrna, he saith, Polycarp was appointed Bishop, and had care of the Churches of Asia. Where then, according to St. Jerome, is this Government by Presbyters to be found after the Apostles times?

(4.) No Man lays down greater Reasons for the Change of this Government, than St. Jerome

Quod autem postea non alio est, qui con-
teris proponeretur in Schismati remedium fac-
tum est, ut unusquisque ad se habens Christi
Ecclesiam rumpere. Ad Evag.

Ut unus de Presbyteris alium supereminere
ceteris, ad quem omnis Ecclesia cura periret,
& Schismatum semina tolleretur. In Comment.
ad Tit.

doth. For he saith, That Episcopacy was found ne-
cessary to prevent Schisms
and disorders, and tear-
ing the Church in pieces.
What could be said
more to the Advantage
of any Government
than that it was brought in upon the best
Reason for Government in the World, viz.
the preserving of Peace and Order in the Church?
We need not carry the matter so far, as to
make

make St. *Jerome* charge the *Apostles* with Indiscretion before, in not preventing the first Occasion of Schisms. For he might think, the *Presbyters* would have thought themselves hardly dealt with, to be excluded from Government till the Experiment were tried, and the Confusions following convinced themselves of the Necessity of a Superiour, and so made them more willing to submit. Saint *Jerome* seems to have had the same kind of Notion of Church Government, which others have of the beginnings of Civil Government, viz. That at first there was a State of War among Mankind, and the inconveniencies of that made men willing to part with their own Rights for the sake of Peace; so these *Presbyters*, finding so much Disorder and Confusion, by being left to themselves, were far better contented to yield to such Government as would best keep the Church in Peace.

(5.) St. *Jerome* yields, that this Alteration of Government did Universally obtain. For nothing less than that can be meant by his *In toto orbe decretum est*: He doth not speak clearly, whether he means a Decree of the *Apostles* to bind the Church, or a General Consent; but whichsoever be meant, he supposes no difference, or opposition about it. If

he had said it was done by the *Apostles* in plain terms, he had taken away the force of his own Argument, which goes upon the *Apostles Times*; but yet it is hard to conceive how such an alteration should happen without the *Apostles Act*. For, if they had left the *Presbyters* in full Power of Government, it is not to be imagin'd, they would so universally part with it, without being obliged thereto, by those who had Authority over them; but this St. *Jerome* leaves to be gather'd by the Event.

(6.) St. *Jerome* never supposes this Alteration to have been made against any Institution of Christ. All that he saith, is, *That there was a time when the Presbyters were left to themselves, and so did Govern the Church by common Consent. And at that time the Apostles Writing to them suppose a Bishop and Presbyter the same: but he never saith that Christ had appointed, that none should be set over them. For then there could be no Alteration without Violation of a Law of Christ, which he could never suppose would so universally obtain without opposition. And he never dreamt the setting up of this Government to be any part of the Mystery of Iniquity then working; unless he could imagine the preserving the Peace of the Church to be it.* On the

the contrary, *St. Jerome* makes this Government in the very same Places to bear an Analogy to *Aaron and his Sons, and the Levites in the Temple, to Moses and the LXX. Elders under the Law*: and in other Places out of the heat of Dispute, when the Roman Deacons were not in his head, he makes the Bishops the Successors of the Apostles. But if they had come in by Usurpation, he would have called them the Successors of *Simon Magus, of Diotrephes, of Caiaphas*, and according to his warm manner of Expression, of *Lucifer* himself.

(7.) *St. Jerome* concludes this Alteration to have been made on such good grounds, that all Persons are bound to submit to it, and to be subject to the Bishops as their *Spiritual Governors*: Nay, he makes the Peace and Welfare of the Church to depend upon it. And nothing more can be said in that respect for any Government, than even *St. Jerome* speaks for *Episcopacy*.

Puerum O Ecclesia, Apostoli Patres tui—
Nunc quia isti recesserunt a mandato, habes pro
his Episcopos filios, quia te creati sunt; sunt e-
nim et hi Patres tui, quia ad ipsos reverteris.
Comment. ad Psal. 44. Ceterum omnes Apostola-
rum Successores sunt. Ad Evagr. Apud nos A-
postolorum locum Episcopi tenent. Ad Marcel-
lam.

*Esse subditum Pontifici suo et quasi Anima Pa-
rentem suscipe. Ad Nepocian.*

*Nec hoc deus quod instituit Gradibus in Eccle-
sia non debeat esse subiecti. Quicunque enim ma-
ledixerit Patri aut Matri morte morietur. Ex
Apostolo docet. Præpositis in Ecclesia obediendum.
In Mich. c. 7.*

*Ecclesia Salus in summi Sacerdotis Dignitate
pendet, qui si non tueris quodam et ab omnibus
emineas dicitur posita, in Ecclesia efficitur
Schismata, quæ Sacerdotes. Advers. Luciferia-
non.*

(IV. *Consid.*) The Universal Consent of the Church being proved, there is as great Reason to believe, the *Apostolical Succession* to be of *Divine Institution*, as the *Canon of Scripture*, or the *Observation of the Lord's Day*. We do not doubt but it is unlawfull to add to, or to diminish from the *Canon of Scripture*; and yet there is no plain Text for it, with respect to all the Books contained in it, and some of the Books were a long time disputed in some Churches; but the Churches coming at last to a full Agreement in this matter, upon due search and enquiry, hath been thought sufficient to bind all after-Ages to make no Alterations in it. And as to the *Divine Institution* of the *Lord's Day*, we do not go about to lessen it, but onely to shew, that some Examples in Scripture, being joined with the *Universal Practice* of the Church in its purest Ages, hath been allowed to be sufficient ground not onely for following Ages to observe it, but to look on it as at least an *Apostolical Institution*. Now it cannot but seem unequal, not to allow the same force, where there is the same Evidence. And therefore our Church hath wisely and truly determined, *That since the Apostles times there have been three Orders, of Bishops, Priests and Deacons; and in a Regular,*

lar, well constituted Church, are to continue to the World's end.

III. The last thing to be spoken to, is the *Care* and *Circumspection* necessary in admitting Persons to the Exercise of this holy Function here mention'd, *Lay hands suddenly on no man*. And that will appear very reasonable on these accounts, because the *Welfare* of the Church, the *Honour* of Religion, and the *Salvation* of Mens Souls depend so much upon those who are admitted to holy Orders; and therefore it is not onely *Negligence* and *Stupidity*, but *Unfaithfulness* to the *Trust* reposed in them, if through their Fault they suffer unfit Men to take upon them to be the Ministers of holy things.

(I.) The *Welfare* of the Church is so much concerned in it. It is true, some have higher Places, greater Authority, more powerfull Influence on the State of the Church than others have; but yet every Wheel must be in its due Order and Motion, or the whole may be easily disturbed. A loose, irregular Clergy have so great Influence on the Minds of some People, with respect to the whole Church, that they will never think well of that Church where such Persons are employ'd. For they will not distinguish the Good and Bad,

Bad, where it is more suitable to their Interest, and Prejudices not to doe it.

And we find, by too sad Experience, if those who are disaffected to our Church have met with unfit Persons in their Places, though very obscure and remote, what perpetual Clamour they make with it all their Lives after; and what Insinuations are given, that the rest were alike; and this is still pleaded, how unjustly soever, as the most popular Argument for Separation. So that a Scandalous Clergy-Man doeth unspeakable Mischief, not onely to his own and others Souls, but to the whole Church he owns himself to be of. And very many good Examples do not signifie so much to the Benefit of a Church, as a few bad ones doe to the Mischief of it.

(2.) The *Honour of Religion* lies at Stake too; which suffers very much, when those who pretend to Teach others the way to Heaven, are seen going themselves, and drawing others into the Broad Way to Destruction. Our Preaching to the People their Duties, doth but make them more narrowly watch and observe our Lives, to see whether we live agreeably to the Directions we give them. And if we slight in our Practice what we Preach in the Pulpit, if we act our selves just contrary to what we require from them, it will be
hardly

hardly possible to convince them we are in earnest, and believe any thing of Religion our selves. And how can we imagine they should regard what we say in the Pulpit, if they plainly see we regard it not our selves when we are out of it? It was *Aristotle's* observation long ago; That it is not what Men speak, which moves the People so much, as the Opinion they have of the Person that speaks; and therefore the Oratours of old put into the Definition of one fit to persuade the People, that he must have *the Reputation of a good Man*; otherwise all he speaks will be thought onely Art or Design.

Fab. Quintil. l. 2. c. 16. l. 12. c. 1.

I know no way to have the reputation of a Good Man, like being so: and we are infinitely more concerned to be so, than those, whose great Business was to put false Colours upon things. We speak the Words of Truth and Soberness; let us not then make the People question them, by not finding the due effects of them in our own Conversations. They are very apt to suspect we look on Preaching as our Trade, and mind it no more than the *Silver-smiths* did the Shrines they made for *Diana*, which they set off to the best advantage, not for the Reverence they had for *Diana*, but for the Gain She brought to the Craftsmen. We have no such effectual Way to

Act. 19. 24.

convince our Auditors, that we mean what we say, as when they find us to be great Examples our selves of the Duties we press upon them, viz of Devotion, Humility, Charity, Sobriety, Mortification, Contentedness, Peaceable, and Universal Holiness: and when the People see our *Light shining before them*, by the good Works we doo, we shall there by excite them to glorifie God, to think better of Religion, and to follow our Example.

(3.) The *Salvation of Mens Souls* depends very much upon the *Care and Conduct* of those who are to be their Guides to Heaven. For, if they lead them astray, whom they think they are bound to follow, their destruction will be unavoidable. *When the blind lead the blind, they both fall into the Ditch*; but yet the blind leader falls first, and falls heaviest and deepest, and the other falls upon him, and sinks him lower. It is a sad thing to have the Guilt of other Mens sins, as well as our own to answer for; when by our Wilfull Neglect of our known Duty, or by our Examples, or by our Erroneous Doctrine, we prove the Occasion of damning those Souls, which were committed to our Charge to conduct them to Heaven.

The Care of Souls would be a dreadfull thing indeed, if we were to answer for all the

Miscar-

Miscarriages of the People committed to our Charge: But if they are such as happen through the voluntary and plain Omission of the Duty laid upon us; or our being Accessory to their Commission of them, they may be justly charged on our Account.

With what *Care* and *Caution* then ought all Persons to enter upon so weighty, so holy, so tremendous a Charge? What Preparation of Mind is necessary to consider it! What *Fasting* and *Prayer* to obtain God's Assistance in it! What *Wisdom*, and *Piety*, and *Resolution* to discharge it!

But let us not be dishearten'd; we serve a Gracious Master, and in the best Employment; and although we may meet with many Difficulties, within and without, and on all sides, yet let us be *stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, for as much as we know, that our labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.*

F I N I S.

Errata.

P^{Age 18. l. 27. dele not.}
 37. in the Margin, l. 19. r. cal si non enim.